
The Catalyst



The Newsletter for Interpretation in California State Parks

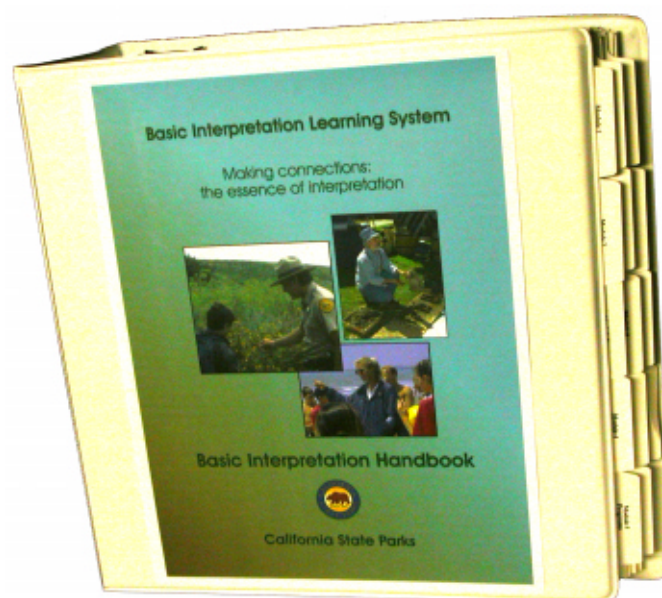
Winter 2004

Volume 7 No. 3

Have you forgotten your BILS?

By Jonathan Williams

California State Parks has a new tool, and it represents a major milestone in interpretive training. The Basic Interpretation Learning System (BILS) provides our department's first-ever comprehensive, standardized resource for introductory interpretive training. Intended primarily as a foundation for ranger and lifeguard cadets who are taking Basic Visitor Services at William Penn Mott Jr. Training Center, it also is a valuable guide for any interpreter who provides programs and services directly to the public.



The handbook, written by Carolyn Ward and Alan Wilkinson, with contributions from California State Parks staff, is a stand-alone resource containing modules on: Purpose and Values, Communications, Planning, Programs, Talks, Walks, Campfire!, Kids!, Roving, Audiovisual, Evaluation and Professionalism. For each module there is a student workbook.

This handbook and student workbook, together with the related training that must accompany them, provide the tools to help realize the full potential of all California State Parks interpreters.

Look for a copy to arrive at your district soon!



Basic Visitor Services instructors met at Marconi recently to plan the implementation of the new B.I.L.S. into the Training Center Curriculum.



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Museums, museums, museums,
object-lessons rigged out to
illustrate the unsound theories
of archaeologists, crazy attempts
to coordinate and get into a fixed
order that which has no fixed order
and will not be coordinated! It is sick-
ening! Why must all experience be
systematized?. . . A museum is not a
first-hand contact: it is an illustrated
lecture. And what one wants is the
actual vital touch.



— D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930)

Contributor's Guidelines

The Catalyst welcomes your original articles up to two pages in length. We prefer unpublished material, but will occasionally reprint items published elsewhere. Be sure to include information about the publication so we can get permission to use the material. You may submit an article at any time. Please include a photo whenever possible.

We really appreciate items submitted on disk or by e-mail. We can read most DOS/Windows file formats. Please send photos as separate files, not inserted into your document. You may also submit original photos or other illustrations to the Catalyst. All photos and artwork submitted will be returned promptly. We reserve the right to edit all material. Items are selected for publication solely at the discretion of the editor and publisher. We appreciate your suggestions.

From the Editor

We are pleased to bring you another issue of the Catalyst. We just hope you can find the time to read it during these crazy times. You will find two mini-themes in this issue — interpretive exhibits and the National Interpreter's Workshop. The recent Reno workshop is not exactly news at this point, but I was intrigued to read the varied reactions from a variety of interpretive professionals in our department. I think you may find them interesting too.



In spite of the lean budget times we still have a variety of interpretive exhibit projects currently in the works. So you will also find a suite of stories about exhibits. And don't overlook the fire workshop and other resources mentioned on the next page. You will find the Master Interpreter presiding on page 5 as usual, offering gratuitous advice to the interpretively challenged.

On page 6, Russ Surber, Guide I (PI) at Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument, leads off our series on the NIW. You can reach him at rdsurber@charter.net.

On page 8, Pat Clark-Gray helps bring the CCC back to life in her NIW story. Pat is the DIS at Monterey and would love to hear from you at PGRAY@parks.ca.gov.

Rouvaishyana, a State Park Interpreter Assistant at Mendocino, presents his report on the NIW on page 10. You can contact him at bpr@mcn.org.

Kicking off our interpretive exhibits mini-theme, page 12 brings "Giant Salmon Planned for Nimbus Hatchery." It was written by Bruce Forman, an Interpretive Services Supervisor for the Department of Fish & Game. You can reach Bruce at BForman@dfg.ca.gov. A peek at the new exhibits at Cal Citrus SHP follows on page 13.

Nancy Mendez is a State Park Interpreter II working out of the Southern Service Center. She sends us "New Exhibits for One of California's Oldest State Parks" on page 14. Nancy can be reached at NMENDEZ@parks.ca.gov.

And rounding out our exhibit section is a look at how three common materials for interpretive panels stand up to a wildfire on page 16.

Page 17 introduces an exciting new resource for natural history interpreters titled *Science, Poetry, And Parks*. It is a specialized bibliography—a survey of the literature that describes, explains, and celebrates California's rich natural heritage. It was written by John Werminski who can be reached at (916) 653-8959.

On page 18 we bring you the unique perspective of three "park brats" who grew up in State Parks. At superintendent Dave Nelson's recent retirement, his three daughters shared this piece, and we think you might enjoy it too. Dave can be reached at ked@psln.com.

On page 20 you will find a piece by Jaime Mendez, part of her ongoing series, "The Road Less Traveled." Jaime is a Guide I at Hearst Castle®; you can email her at tahquish@att.net.

And you'll find another installment of "California's Tapestry," back in its usual place. This piece marks the end of a ten-year run as Jack Shu heads off for retirement. We thank Jack for helping to keep us thinking about these critical issues, and we wish him well in his retirement. But Tapestry will continue; you can look forward to our first Tapestry written by our old friend Michelle Edwards in the next issue.

And that's about it for our winter issue — enjoy! Thanks to each of you for reading *The Catalyst!* 🐾

Brian Cahill, Editor



What's Up?



Interpreters' Resources

Interpreting Wildland Fires

Thursday, March 11, 2004, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm at Acorn Naturalists' Center for Science and Environmental Education in Tustin. The latest information and techniques for interpreting fires will be presented. We'll hear from researchers and learn practical ways that fire-scarred lands can be used for interpretation and environmental education.

You'll receive training on BLM's new CD-ROM-based curriculum, *Burning Issues*, and the National Park Service's *Studies in Wildland Fire Ecology*. The cost is only \$25 for NAI members /\$40 for nonmembers, and lunch is included. This workshop is presented in conjunction with the California Parks Conference. For more info contact Joanie Cahill (jcahill@parks.ca.gov) or Jennifer Rigby (emailacorn@aol.com).

A California Adventure, Rediscover the Magic!

Have a magical time in Anaheim March 8-11 at the 2004 Parks Conference. Held at the Anaheim Crowne Plaza Resort, it will feature a variety of sessions designed to enhance your

professional skill set. Social gatherings will feature great interpretive programs, and there will be plenty of time to network with colleagues from around California and Nevada. For more info contact Amy at lethbridge@smmc.ca.gov.



Earthquake Photos

If you interpret geology, you may be interested in the photos that R. Forrest Hopson took of the Landers earthquake surface ruptures. He just posted them on the Web, and says, "Feel free to use them for your teaching and interpretation presentations." See http://www.geoinfoservices.net/landers_eq.html.

Raptors In The City

Raptors in the City is a real-time, inquiry-based science and technology program for grades 4-6 that stars the peregrine falcon. The online portion of Raptors in the City guides children through nesting season (roughly February to June) as they watch the still rare falcons live via cameras mounted on skyscrapers. The students learn environmental, biological and technological lessons, as well as research skills tied to science and technology standards. See www.raptorsinthecity.homestead.com.

Youth Award

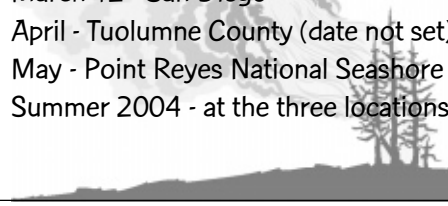
The Barron Prize recognizes young people from age 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Half of each year's winners are chosen for their work to protect the environment. Winners receive \$2,000 to support their service work or for their higher education. The deadline is April 30, 2004. For more information visit www.barronprize.org.

Great Book

A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson could change your view of the planet and your role as an interpreter. Bryson points out how intricate our world is and how very little we know about it. Discover history from the beginning of the universe to the latest theories on the structure of an atom. It is packed full of interesting stories about our planet. One of the most powerful sections of the book deals with conservation. Bryson spends several pages sharing the fate of the dodo bird, passenger pigeon, Carolina parakeet, and the Tasmanian tiger. This book shows how fragile and intricate life is on our planet, and that as caretakers of our planet, we are the only species capable of making a real difference. \$15.95 paperback, from your favorite bookseller.

More Fire Training

California's wildfire season won't officially begin for a few more months - but education about wildfire in California never stops. Check the PLT website at www.plt.org (click on calendar under "fire education" in California) for the details on other workshops and events that focus on fire ecology and fire management education. Upcoming Burning Issues / PLT workshops will be held:
February 7 - CSU-Monterey Bay
March 11 - Tustin (see left)
March 12 - San Diego
April - Tuolumne County (date not set)
May - Point Reyes National Seashore
Summer 2004 - at the three locations



Dear Master Interpreter

Dear Master Interpreter,

I recently saw the word "interpretative" used in a sentence (by someone I respect). Is that really a word?

Wordsmith

Dear Wordsmith,

NO! Someone was not having a good day when they wrote that. "Interpretative" is simply not a word. Interpretive is the proper adjective form. Likewise the verb is interpret not "interpretate." There is no excuse for using the words "Interpretative" and "interpretate." There is already enough confusion about the name of our profession.

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

The whole world seems to be switching from slides to PowerPoint, and I am heading that way too. I'm looking for a digital camera. Do you know how many megapixels I will need if I want my pictures to look really sharp on an 8-foot screen?

Sharpie

Dear Sharpie,

You may be surprised, but you really do not need a very high resolution image for PowerPoint, no matter how big your screen is. Most digital



projectors we are using these days can display a limited number of pixels. So you can get very good pictures for PowerPoint with a 2 megapixel camera. Anything more is wasted and may even cause your images to display slowly. Where you really need the resolution is for making prints. Choose your camera based on the largest PRINT you think you will need. You will find you have more than enough resolution for PowerPoint in even relatively inexpensive digital cameras.

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

We need some mounted animals for our Visitor Center. I went to my local taxidermist hoping to buy a raccoon mount. He explained (and I guess I should have known) that they are not an off-the-shelf item and that I need to provide a dead 'coon. I'm not planning to go out and shoot one so we are waiting for the next one to step out in front of a car. Then he told me it is going to cost \$975 just to mount it. Is he trying to rip me off?

Nobody's Fool

Dear Nobody,

Buying taxidermy is a lot like buying art. Some of it is worth that kind of price and some of it is not. Look critically at his work, or get a recommendation from someone who knows this field. A high-quality mount is a piece of custom wildlife art and may well be worth that price. Mean-

while I'll check the freezer out back to see if we can supply that specimen.

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

We just got some new interpretive panels in our park, and I was surprised to see they are not protected by plexiglass like our old ones were. Should we be concerned about vandalism?

Regular Ranger

Dear RR,

There are many different materials being used for interpretive panels these days. Most of them are more durable and resistant to vandalism than the old silkscreened panels we used to use. Some of the materials (like self-adhesive vinyl) can even be degraded by the greenhouse-like conditions created by a plexiglass cover. Other materials like high pressure laminates or porcelain enamel can be more durable (and easier to clean) than plexiglass, making the cover an unnecessary visual distraction. Check with your panel supplier for specific recommendations, but resist the urge to cover everything with plexiglass just because that's the way we always did it!

MI.



Can Interpretation be a Profession?

**By Russ Surber, Guide I (PI)
Hearst San Simeon SHM**

Recently I had the honor of being one of several scholarship recipients who attended the November National Association for Interpretation's National Interpreters Workshop (NIW) in (Reno) Sparks, Nevada. Always the skeptic, and a veteran of national conventions hosted by other professional organizations, my expectations were not terribly high as I drove up US 395 towards Nevada. I was wrong. The NIW was a wonderful experience highlighted by the chance to spend nearly five days with some of the nation's most accomplished practitioners of interpretation.

The workshop was organized around a series of concurrent sessions that ran in the morning and afternoon, each individual session focusing on a particular aspect of interpretation. Almost regardless of your interests or needs, there were sessions focusing on things that would be of use to you when you returned to your park or monument or office. Kicking off each day's activities were a series of keynote speakers intended to provoke thought and get you in the mood for the day's events.

Without question the star of the keynote speakers was a National Park Service interpretive ranger from Yosemite who gave a moving, funny, educational, and revealing example of the art and craft of living history. Shelton Johnson portrayed an African-American soldier recruited in

mid-1880s Nebraska after leaving his home in the Carolinas. As an articulate and witty Buffalo Soldier, as African-American troops were called, Johnson came alive on stage to the point that you forgot that he was an interpreter in character.

For myself, however, I was interested in the broader question of whether what we do can rightly be called a profession. In late August when you are working ten-hour days

talking on the subject of professionalism. The first, Donna Asbury, is not an interpreter but the business-trained executive director of Association of Partners for Public Lands. The points she made were very interesting. First, she said that as an outsider looking into the world of interpretation she was impressed by the core skills interpreters possess — skills, she opined, that would make us very attractive prospects for employers in the private and public sector. Those

We are the Department's primary, front-line practitioners of interpretation. Together we meet literally thousands of people every day in parks and monuments across the state.

and giving five tours to crowds that seem at times indifferent to your presentations, it is hard to tell yourself that you are a professional and that you have professional obligations to the guests who stand before you. Consequently, I wanted to listen to some of the leaders in our field talk about interpretation as a profession and see if what they said rang true and, if so, did the criteria they used apply to me, a Guide I (PI) at Hearst Castle.

The session that was most useful in this regard was a 90-minute seminar entitled, appropriately, "Is Interpretation A Profession?" It was led by Corky Mayo, Chief of Interpretation for the National Park Service and one of the principal forces behind the NPS's new training syllabus. The session began with a series of speakers from a variety of backgrounds

skills include the ability to do research, to speak in public both comfortably and with passion, to manage time in efficient ways, and to master nonformal education. These are skills that are sought after in the broader business community that is far separated from the settings in which interpreters traditionally work. Ms. Asbury's point was that as professionals we have skills that can be applied in both traditional and non traditional settings.

Amy Galperin, National Lead Interpreter for BLM, talked about the responsibility we have for bringing interpretive opportunities to the attention of those who manage our parks and monuments. When we see an area that might usefully be presented to the public through interpretation, we should call that matter to

the attention of our supervisors along with at least an idea of how it could be better interpreted. She made mention of natural disaster as one example of how we often overlook opportunities. Certainly the terrible fires of the past few months afford us an interpretive opportunity to educate the public about the need to better care for our public and private open spaces.

Corky Mayo ended the individual presentations with a thoughtful review of what makes a collection of skills a profession and why, in his judgment, interpretation fits that definition. He began by speaking about the "maturation of interpretation." That maturation process has certain characteristics common with all other professions, characteristics that can be easily identified.

First, professions have a clear beginning, a distinct, measurable time when what we do morphs from merely a job into something grander. He noted that less than 80 miles from our hotel in Sparks stood the Fallen Leaf Lodge, where in 1921 the Chief Ranger of the Park Service met and was deeply impressed by the lodge owners. This family had traveled extensively in Europe and was conducting tours of Yosemite based on a combination of techniques they had seen practiced in Europe. The Chief Ranger was so impressed by this family that he hired the Lodge to conduct tours of Yosemite for the Park Service and, in doing so, created what might be considered the first government-employed interpreters. The word "interpretation," he noted first appears in Park Service literature

in the early 1930s, the time to which he believes we can reasonably trace our beginning as a profession.

Second, professions have research-based literature that is designed to further the knowledge of practitioners. We certainly have that, looking no further than the seminal work of Freeman Tilden and the flood of interpretive theory and literature that has followed in his path. Pursuing this, Mayo made a strong call for everyone involved in interpretation to consider writing for publication. Publication is another means of getting the story of interpretation out to a broader public and to better establish our credentials within the professional community.

Third, professions have a distinct language they use among themselves to communicate complex ideas in a sort of shorthand. Mayo suggested that we have such a language and use it daily when communicating within the interpretive community.

Finally, professions have symbols and awards used in the first instance to encourage a sense of belonging and in the second to acknowledge the contributions of individuals to their craft. While Mayo spoke of the Park Service arrowhead as a nationally recognized symbol, I would like to think that the Golden Bear of DPR provokes a similar positive response both within the profession and without. As far as awards are concerned, the NIW's centerpiece was a series of award ceremonies at which men and women from a wide variety of agencies and backgrounds were publicly recognized for their service

to interpretation.

So, I came away from Sparks and the NIW with a sense of belonging to a much larger community of professionals than I had realized existed and with a pride in the art and craft we practice that was not there when I arrived.

Specifically, I want to address those of us in DPR who labor under the work title of Guide. Because of the way the department has organized itself, we often tend not to think of ourselves as "interpreters" because that is an entirely different job classification. The fact is, however, that we are the department's primary, front-line practitioners of interpretation. Together we meet literally thousands of people every day in parks and monuments across the state and "interpret" for them the meaning, importance and place of these sites in their lives and in the lives of their families and neighbors. There is no higher calling I can imagine than to be charged with the responsibility of helping the people of this state appreciate their history and environment in ways that will lead them to actively support the protection and preservation of this often fragile heritage.

The National Association for Interpretation is working hard to assist us in this endeavor. I would urge everyone who might read this article and who is not a member of the NAI to consider joining the one organization I can think of that is dedicated to improving our craft and our position in the broader park/monument/museum community. 🐾

CCC at the NIW

By Patricia Clark-Gray, Monterey District Interpretive Specialist

From November 12 -15, I attended the National Interpreter's Workshop (NIW) in Reno, Nevada, sponsored by the National Association for Interpretation on a scholarship provided by the department. The last NIW that I attended was over 10 years ago in Santa Clara, so I was pleased to attend this one. More than 50 department staff also attended the conference. Many of our employees were on the NIW committee. Bill Lindeman was the workshop co-chair; Linda McDonald, special events chair; Karen Barrett, volunteer coordination co-chair; Janet Schmidt, publicity/promotions chair; and Brian Cahill, Awards chair/onsite newspaper coordinator.

I enjoyed all the sessions that I attended. One session in particular stood out *"We Can Take It"—How to Make the Historic Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Come Alive in Your Interpretive Programs*. It was presented by Pete Peterson, interpretive park ranger for Crater Lake National Park in Oregon.

"I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work, not interfering with normal employment, and confining itself to forestry, the prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and similar projects. More importantly, however, than the material gains, will be the moral and spiritual value of such work."

— FDR, March 1933.



Pete had the above quote on the first page of his handout. He proceeded to illustrate that not only did the CCC accomplish FDR's goals, but they accomplished much more. He divided his talk into four parts. During the first part, *What is the Legacy?*, he told us his personal story about his passion and connection to the CCC. Through his story about his friend Joe Hebda of CCC Company 2349 at Camp SP-25, he painted a picture of the CCC, the Great Depression, and the impact of the CCC on the lives of young men. He also made the point that we need to record the stories of the men who were in the CCC before they are all gone.

He then presented the *Seven Point Guide to Identifying the CCC Legacy*. The seven points are: 1. the "rustic style" of naturalistic principles, 2. use of native/local materials to fit into surroundings, 3. wood shingles, 4. "pioneer" craftsmanship, 5. exposed interior roof trusses, 6. hand wrought hardware and metalwork, and 7. stone steps and foundations.

In part two, *Why is the Legacy Important?*, Pete tied together the universal concepts and compelling stories of the CCC, such as value and the architectural significance and honor, and recognizing a generation of Americans as well as individuals.

Pete listed several interpretive themes in part three, *How Do You Interpret the Legacy?* One theme "Life in the CCC gave an honorable sense of direction and purpose to the young men of the Great Depression," is so universal that it can be used at any state park site that interprets the CCC. I am currently working on interpreting the CCC at Pfeiffer Big Sur SP in the Warden's Cottage. Another theme "The architecture of





the CCC articulates the beauty of the 'Rustic Style' of design," is one theme we will be emphasizing in our interpretation at Pfeiffer. We have Rustic Style rock restrooms, picnic ramadas, water fountains and camp stoves still preserved in the park. With our new exhibits, interpretive panels and brochures, we will help visitors appreciate the beauty of the "Rustic Style."

educational building, garage and repair shop, and other structures. He read portions of *Your CCC, A Handbook for Enrollees*.

The black and white photo he provided of all the men in Company 2349 sitting for a group photo helped us step back in time. At the end of our enrollee session, we all yelled several times, "We Can Take It!" We were ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work building park structures, preventing soil erosion, and most importantly, gaining back our self-esteem through hard work and significant conservation work.

This session for me was timely for two reasons. At the end of the



The "Seven Point Guide to Identifying the CCC Legacy." are the following: 1. the "rustic style" of naturalistic principles, 2. use of native/local materials to fit into surroundings, 3. wood shingles, 4. "pioneer" craftsmanship, 5. exposed interior roof trusses, 6. hand wrought hardware and metalwork, and 7. stone steps and foundations.

During Pete's final part, *Making the Legacy Come Alive*, he portrayed camp staff (dressed in a blue denim shirt and jeans) and had us portray newly arrived CCC enrollees (rookies) at Camp Piney Echo. To help us visualize the camp, Pete provided a map of Camp Piney Echo (NP-16) showing the barracks, mess hall,

session, one woman said that time is running out because many of these CCC men are passing on, and we need to hear and write down their stories. So if you work at a park that has CCC connections, find these men and gather their stories. We also need to protect the CCC buildings and structures. Unfortunately, during the

recent southern California wildfires we lost the historic Dyar house at Cuyamaca SP and Camp Hual-cu-cuish, which was used by local scouts and was one of the best examples of the CCC-era park rustic architecture.

All staff needs to be involved in protecting the remaining CCC legacies in our parks. We need to make sure all of the buildings and structures are on the Park Infrastructure Database (PID), and we need to look for funding to protect our remaining buildings and structures. Then we need to share the importance of the CCC and their legacy with our park visitors through all interpretive media. 🐾

National Interpreters Workshop Highlights

**By Rouvaishyana, State Park
Interpreter Assistant, Mendocino**

In this article I hope to capture some of the essence of this year's National Interpreters Workshop in Reno/Sparks. It was a privilege to attend NIW 2003 on a DPR scholarship. I would like to thank the department and the scholarship committee, who selected the handful of recipients. I would also like to thank our nonprofit association, Mendocino Area Parks Association, who helped out with part of my lodging and travel expenses.

During the few days before the workshop officially began, optional sessions, field trips, and the Interpretive Management Institute were held. The opening reception was Tuesday evening, November 11. There were dozens of public and private exhibitors in the exhibition hall, and a troupe of Basque dancers greeted us.

The days generally began with a keynote address, followed by an almost mind-boggling array of concurrent sessions on a variety of interpretive topics. DPR interpretive staff were advised ahead of time that the National Park Service (NPS) was putting on a series of sessions on meanings-based interpretation. I attended three of these sessions, and they are part of a well-thought-out training program used in that agency.

Wednesday morning, Paiute-Shoshone elder Ashley George greeted us with background informa-



DPR was well represented at this year's NIW — a week packed with activity, information, new ideas, and many opportunities.

tion on his tribe and their language, followed by a prayer of blessing on the workshop. Keynote speaker Karen Rauch Carter discussed the Chinese topic of feng shui, and was able to relate several of its guiding principles to interpretation. The morning's topics included:

- *Making Meaningful Connections part of the NPS series*
- *Interpreting Sensitive Topics*
- *History in Song*
- *Birding by Ear*
- *NAI Goes International, and many others.*

After lunch storyteller Megumi told true stories of Japanese-American internment during World War II. A couple who had experienced this part of American history joined her and answered questions from the audience. Afternoon topics included:

- *The Magic of Plants*
- *Designing Educational Curriculum*
- *NAI's Certification Program: Who Needs It?*

NAI regional meetings were held late that afternoon.

Thursday's keynote speaker was Shelton Johnson, an NPS Yosemite ranger, who did his wonderful presentation on the unsung "Buffalo Soldiers," black US cavalymen who guarded the National Parks in the Sierra during the early 1900s. Morning sessions included:

- *Is Interpretation a Profession?*
- *Analyze This!" (I attended this, another in the NPS series)*
- *The Unnatural Nature Trail*
- *4-1/2 Billion Years of History in 90 Minutes.*

And the afternoon offerings?

- *Reptile Rendezvous*
- *Music in Learning*

• *Interpretation and the Difficult Audience* (the people that don't or won't come)

• *"On Becoming a Nature Nerd* (I attended this one, and it was more serious than the title suggested. The main points were that social supports are very important to encouraging people to choose either recreation or serious study in outdoor or nature topics, and that social trends show a decrease in these things nationwide. What does this mean for us?

Thursday afternoon was also time for our own DPR staff meeting, a time to get updated on interpreter exams, the hiring freeze, the fires in southern California, and "Arnold." Nobody seemed to want to call him Gov. Schwarzenegger yet. Following this were NAI Section meetings. I attended the meeting of the Council for the Interpretation of Native Peoples.

Friday was the day for off-site sessions. Conference attendees could opt for field trips in the Reno

area, several to Lake Tahoe, a session on the Donner party, Virginia City, Carson City, sessions on mining in the Comstock area, birdwatching, and two to Pyramid Lake. I chose one of the latter.

We visited the Paiute Tribal Museum, a pictograph site, and the tribal trout hatchery with two Paiute tribal guides. We never actually got to the shore of the lake itself, but learned about its environs and the people who depend on the lake for survival. Friday night was the live auction, an exciting place to be. Several silent auctions had been held during the days prior, but this was the big one.

Saturday's keynote speaker was Cathy Luchetti, who offered a series of vignettes of pioneer life, some humorous, some revolting. An alternate title for her talk could have been, *The Good Old Days—That Weren't*. Morning topics:

- *"Imagination to the Printed Word*
- *"Can't Carry a Tune in a Bucket?*
- *A session on Aldo Leopold's Work*

• *The Advanced Interpretive Equation*, the final in the NPS series

Afternoon:

- *Igniting Your Interpretive Intelligence*, about the Multiple Intelligence Theory
- *A session on oral history*
- *Dancing Your Way Through History*
- *Hire the Best, Forget the Rest*
- *The Art of Seeing*, John

Werminski's stunning display of visual effects and light phenomena observed in nature, organized around his challenge to examine the overlooked processes and our own faulty observations, preconceptions, and misconceptions. This session was truly the piece de resistance.

Throughout the workshop, one could check out the exhibits, look for listings in the job fair, participate in silent auctions, attend evening functions, or just meet other interpreters from various agencies. This year's NIW was definitely a week packed with activity, information, new ideas, and many opportunities to forge new networks and new alliances. 🐾



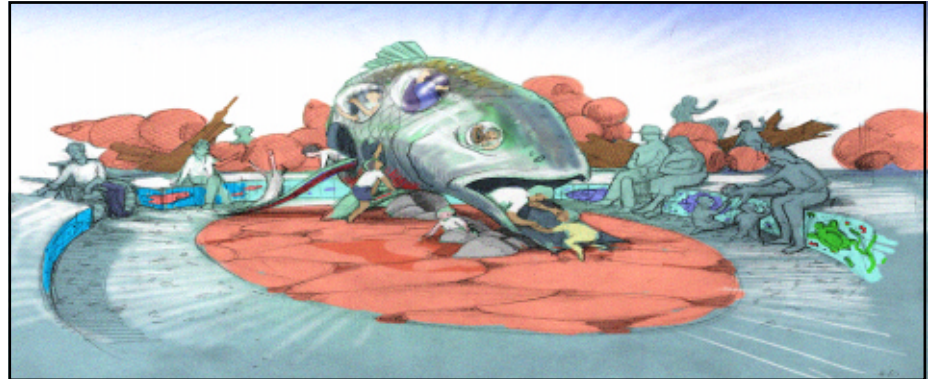
One field trip brings a group of cultural history interpreters to Virginia City. Photo by Russ Surber whose story appears on page 6.

Giant Salmon Planned for Nimbus Hatchery

By Bruce Forman, DFG Interpretive Services Supervisor

The Nimbus Fish Hatchery in Rancho Cordova is adding to its free educational attractions. Fishy Playscapes will be a unique, exploratory and playful destination opportunity for families with young children to learn about and enjoy the natural environment. A 20-foot "Giant Salmon" with canopy will feature a "climb and slide" salmon complete with soft sculptured teeth and skeletal features. A tactile wall expressing colorful embossed silhouettes of river animals will be set in a newly landscaped area. Additional phases will include giant egg clusters to crawl through, a fishing boat to simulate and stimulate the catch of a lifetime, and a life cycle merry-go-round.

Legacy tiles on an artistic benched wall will be available for families and individuals to sponsor Fishy Playscapes. "The first phases of

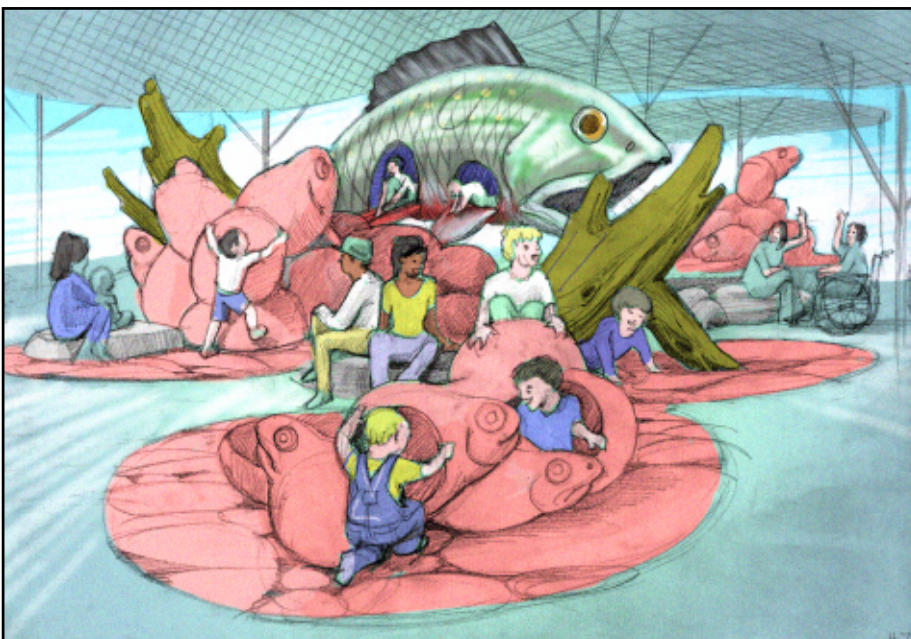


the project are moving forward," said Bruce Forman, project lead. "The Legacy Tiles project will allow individuals to help see the final phase of the project through and become a permanent part of the exhibit."


After two years of planning, a community coalition of government, nonprofit organizations and school districts is moving ahead with the first phase of this ambitious and visionary plan. The project complements new visitor center exhibits, a new water-featured, river-themed ramp for visitors, and a River Discovery Trail.

Construction of the first phase begins in summer 2004.

The initial phase of this project is funded by First Five Sacramento Commission (FFSC), American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Sportfish Restoration (from a federal excise tax on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel). The FFSC uses Prop 10 (tobacco tax) funds to further social, health and recreation services for children under 6 years. This commission also funded a planning grant to engage the community in its developmental phase.



Fishy Playscapes will be a magnet for families and groups from pre-schools and day care centers to learn about the wonders of Chinook Salmon. The playscapes are designed so that young children will have fun climbing, exploring (inside and outside) and playing. They will leave with good feelings about fish, such as that fish are special and they need a home just like people.

For more information about this project, or for an image of the design sketches, contact Bruce Forman at 358-2353 or Bforman@dfg.ca.gov. 

New Exhibits at Cal Citrus SHP

By Superintendent Ron Krueper

California Citrus State Historic Park recently inaugurated a new Visitor Center/Museum complex. The \$3 million project features a 5,000-square foot building that replicates a packing house from the



The museum exhibits tell the first chapter in the story of the California dream, the Journey of Citrus to California.



The museum traces the path of citrus from Asia to Europe, South America and eventually Southern California, even adding fun touches like a faux camel-dung fire along the Silk Road.



A primary objective of Citrus Park is to interpret the "California Dream" promoted in the citrus industry's early advertising, from the turn of the twentieth century through 1935.

1920s. Inside, exhibits detail and describe the "Journey of Citrus" as it traveled around the world, arriving in California where it developed into an industry that transformed California's

image and contributed greatly to the state's rich tapestry of heritage.

The project essentially doubles the size of the park's facilities. The new facilities include an interior road winding through citrus groves lined with stone curbs, palms, jacaranda trees and roses; a focal garden with fountain, benches and antique roses; 90 parking spaces; and trails for viewing citrus groves.

The project was made possible through a unique partnership between the City of Riverside and California State Parks. The Visitor Center building, related outdoor facilities and infrastructure (\$2.4 million) was funded by State Proposition 70 (1988) and administered by the City of Riverside. The interior "Journey of Citrus" exhibits (\$600,000) were funded by State Proposition 12 (2000) and administered by California State Parks. 🐾

New Exhibits for One of California's Oldest State Parks

By Nancy Mendez
State Park Interpreter II
Southern Service Center

Pío Pico State Historic Park has taken on a new life with the recent completion of a major restoration project. Interpreting the site's history dates back more than 100 years when Harriet Strong, a Southern California pioneer, began fundraising efforts to preserve the adobe house that had belonged to rancher and former governor of Mexican California, Pío Pico. By 1917, the Pico Adobe was transferred to State ownership, ten years before the creation of the California State Park system in 1927. Staffing, funding, and public programming have been erratic since those early days.



Original Pico family items, including Mrs. Pico's leather gloves and fan, have received customized mounts and cases. Striped wallpaper was reproduced based on actual fragments found beneath paint layers in the Pico Adobe.



Exhibit components are mounted to the floor to minimize impact to the historic adobe walls.

Everything came to a sudden halt when one fall morning in 1987, the Whittier Narrows Earthquake struck, resulting in damage to the park's only historic structure, the Pico Adobe. Sixteen years and \$5 million later, Pío Pico State Historic Park was re-opened with a grand celebration on September 20, 2003.

The changes are too many to list, but the overall result is an interpretive experience that sets a more accurately restored adobe amidst a reconstructed historic landscape featuring grain fields, citrus orchards, corrals, and a dovecote. Interpretation

now places a greater emphasis on the archaeology and architecture of the adobe itself. In addition, interpretive exhibits highlight the importance of the rancho workers and provide a broader context of Pío Pico's influence in California's 19th century history.

Painstakingly reproduced historic wallpapers, much as Pío had used to decorate his ranch home, can now be seen inside the rooms. A specially constructed "sub-floor" exhibit allows visitors to safely walk over a wall remnant which once divided a larger room into two smaller ones. An audio-visual presentation, reproductions of 19th century furnishings (for visitors to relax on), and sealed exhibit cases (for improved artifact preservation) are among the other new interpretive exhibit components.



Sealed cases were designed using specifications outlined in the Exhibit Conservation Guidelines produced by the National Park Service.



Students from Rio Hondo Community College designed murals in the picnic area that interpret the historic rancho environment. Art instructor Richard Lopez, center, coordinated the project with State Parks staff.

A combination of State Parks employees, the City of Whittier, and contractors contributed to the planning, design, and construction of this project. Interpretive exhibit services were provided by a variety of firms including Bluth Enterprises (video production); Bradbury & Bradbury (wallpaper reproduction); Creative Core (interior exhibits); Rio Hondo Community College (heritage wall murals); and Stone Imagery (exterior signs and interpretive panels).



For more information on this project, contact Nancy Mendez at (619) 688-6105 or via e-mail at nmendez@parks.ca.gov. 🐾



In addition to English, exhibit text is in Spanish, the language spoken by Pío Pico.

How Exhibits Take the Heat at Cuyamaca

The Cedar fire burned through Cuyamaca Rancho State Park on October 28, 2003. A total of 24,414 acres of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park were scorched.

We lost a lot of exhibits that day. But it did give us the opportunity to see how three common exhibit materials handle a fire. 🐾



This is what's left of one of the standard statewide panels. It was created with the fiberglass embedment process, and you can clearly see the glass fibers in the ash.



This glob is what's left of a new HPL or High Pressure Laminate panel. HPL panels are very similar to formica.



Dozens of panels were lost, but we are trying to see this as an interpretive opportunity!



The plexiglass cover did not hold up, but the actual panel did! This is a porcelain enamel panel that we may be able to clean and reuse. Made with glass fused to steel at high temperature, they are the most durable type of panel in a fire.

Introducing A New Resource For Natural History Interpreters:

Science, Poetry, And Parks

**by John Werminski,
Regional Interpretive Specialist
Interpretation and Ed. Division**

Sharing the natural world with park visitors can be a highly rewarding experience. However, *understanding* nature well enough to discuss its features, ways, and meanings can be a daunting task. To convert that task into an adventure is the purpose of a new book titled Science, Poetry, and Parks.

I began working on this project years ago, when the Mott Training Center requested that I develop a list of references for the Cadet class I teach on "Interpreting the California Landscape." One thing led to another, and the list eventually became a book.

Science, Poetry, and Parks is a specialized bibliography—a survey of the literature that describes, explains, and celebrates California's rich natural heritage. Included in it are citations for more than 700 selected works, each accompanied by a paragraph or two suggesting why that source is potentially valuable or interesting to interpreters. For convenience, I've grouped the entries by subject (there are more than thirty categories altogether) so that anyone who wants to learn about plant identification, say, or the Sierra Nevada can turn directly to those sections for titles to consult.

Many of the listed sources involve one branch of natural science or another, often relating specifically

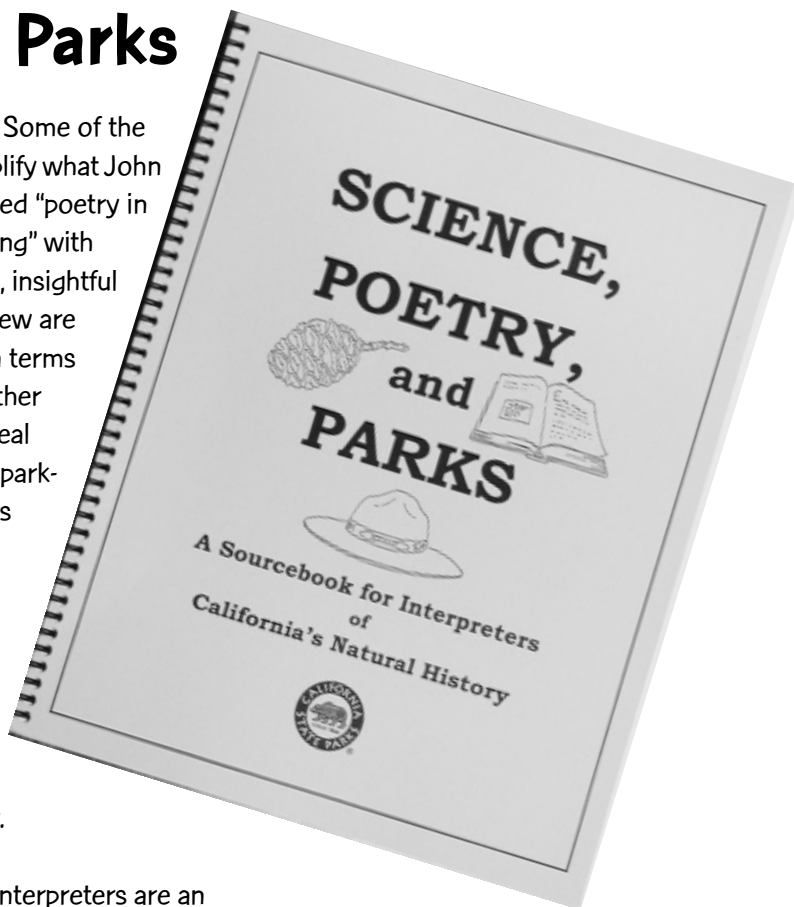
to California. Some of the listings exemplify what John Steinbeck called "poetry in scientific writing" with their eloquent, insightful prose (and a few are even poetic in terms of rhyme). Other cited works deal with parks or park-related matters such as resource management and interpretation. Thus the book's title is accounted for.

Because interpreters are an eclectic lot, the sources in this bibliography are an unusual mix. You'll find standard references and popular field guides among the listings, as you might expect; but they're joined by textbooks, novels, literary anthologies, journals, atlases, newspaper articles, and magazines. The majority of sources I've recommended are readily available, but some of the most fascinating ones are long out of print, and a search for them may lead you on a treasure hunt through the corridors of a college library or into rare book stores.

Even if you don't have much time for research or reading, you still should find Science, Poetry, and Parks to be a useful reference by simply browsing its pages. Its annota-

tions are filled with thought-provoking ideas, interesting natural history facts, and insightful interpretive quotes on a multitude of topics. But if you *are* willing to invest some time, this treasury of sources can open exciting new vistas of the California landscape...and help you chart a course for your long-range development as an interpreter.

Copies of the bibliography are being distributed to the field, and they should be appearing soon in park units and district offices around the state. If you are an interpreter of natural history and would like your own copy, contact John Werminski at jwerm@parks.ca.gov or (916) 653-8959.



Dad's Retirement Speech

By Jessica, Katlin,
and Klytia Nelson.

Editor's Note: *At Diablo Vista (Silverado) Superintendent Dave Nelson's retirement, his three daughters read segments of this in turn. It was very moving how these women reflected on what it meant to them to grow up in State Parks—and the influence of these special places on children.*

If we were to reflect on our father, you would hear anecdotes involving coaching, fishing, cooking, and general philosophies on life, such as how EVERYTHING boils down to free throws and rebounds. However, these attributes of our father continue on past this evening. So, we'd like to share with you what growing up in State Parks and our dad's experience as a ranger has meant to us. You see, we are brats. Park brats.

A park brat is someone who, like a military brat, has become a gypsy for the system. At least one of us has become a part of the park family in the following parks: Point Reyes, Half Moon Bay, San Luis Reservoir, Silverwood Lake, Humboldt Redwoods, Plumas Eureka, Brannan Island, Old Shasta, and Sonoma. In many ways, being a park brat has meant being California -- it is difficult to separate the boundaries of our skin from the soil, trees, and skylines that have made up our childhood.

This has been our story.

We have crawled with desert tortoise between the blood purple juice of prickly pears. We have built imaginary worlds with rock outlines and buried time capsules to preserve periods of life. We have seen the snow fall in silent moments onto to cacti of the high desert. All of this melts into a second—the oxymoron of that which we associate with the

We have breathed deep the air of the Sierras from childhood forts built between Ponderosa pines and Douglas-fir. Our playmates have been innumerable creatures, as well as other park brats or small town kids that, believed that they were wild animals too. We've felt the ecstasy of life from a boulder extending over Grass Lake, as the breeze played with

Old Shasta gave me a great understanding of what my father really did. He was a part of California, a certain part that our family cherished.

extremes of the desert and the extremes of our experiences in California State Parks.

Our world suddenly expanded in scale as we moved from the Mojave to the Redwoods and stood at the base of the Giants in our backyard. Humboldt Redwoods State Park made us believe that we were wood nymphs, running barefoot through the sorrel, hiding in goosepens and staining our hands with the juice of blackberries and huckleberries. We swam with lamprey in the Eel River and our young minds were jarred with the concept of clear cutting as we watched favorite hillsides literally disappear. Abalone feeds, salmon runs, and fresh baked bread from the Samoa Cookhouse grace our memories, like the crazy dreams that dreamweed could bring us ... a trick learned from a Junior Ranger program.

our hair and damsel files danced across the surface. With painted faces and bows and arrows in hand, we imagined we were natives of the land and danced in sheer joy beneath the bridge. We journeyed to the frog pond to learn about the life cycle of tadpoles and found out the hard way that a dry creek cannot support frogs, no matter how many tears you shed.

Johnsville taught us the importance of dreams, as we peeled away the dreams of those who lived before us, like we peeled the layers of wallpaper covering walls of the old miner's house that used to stand next to ours. We learned that these dream times in our lives are little pieces of heaven that drift like seeds from a dandelion blown in the breeze and can fade just as quickly.

Our family is from the San Joaquin Valley, and we spent a handful of years there, later to return to the Sacramento River delta. This area gave us the opportunity to learn about ranches and reservoirs, rivers and wind, cantaloupe and walnuts, pomegranates and oranges, peaches and apricots...which we dried on cheese-cloth on our rooftop. Our cheeks became sunkissed and our gardens bloomed. We listened to the hoot of owls and watched as lizards did push-ups on our fence.

Old Shasta gave me a great understanding of what my father really did. He was a part of California, a certain part that our family cherished. In Shasta, I interacted with visitors by dressing up as a miner's wife and telling stories to school groups passing by the cemetery. Living history was an important part of Old Shasta, as it was with Plumas Eureka where my sisters also took on stories and became the history. Historical sites in our backyard became normal in our lives. I always thought everybody had a barn behind their house and an 1849 main street up the block, but it was typical for me!



Three "Park Brats" (Dave and Elizabeth Nelson's daughters) share with you what growing up in State Parks and their dad's experience as a ranger has meant to them.

welcomed with open arms. And, AHHH!! Our lone glimpse at civilization! Bakeries, walking to the movies, and simply living "in town" has made us appreciate the benefits of living a "city" life. It is funny that the places that started my sister's careers in parks are the same parks that close my father's career.

been accused at one time or another of having a Chamber of Commerce outlook or a State Parks brainwashing, but parks tell a story that we believe is important enough to still tell. These are our backyards. The system of rivers, streams, highways, and roads that connect us exteriorly perhaps somehow attach us all interiorly, as well.

Perhaps what we have learned most is about the relationships between land and people, history and fiction, the line drawn between story and teller.

Sonoma has given us the unique experience in that all of us have been tied to its parks at one time or another. In each case, we've been

Perhaps what we have learned most is about the relationships between land and people, history and fiction, the line drawn between story and teller. This is our story. We have

This is the gift that State Parks and its family have given us. This is the gift our father has shared with us, and our mother has taught us to be patient enough to hear. We thank you for pushing the soil so deeply under our nails and the sand between our toes that we'll never be able to get it out. Parks is our home, and we are its brats. 🐾

The Road Less Traveled

Earth, Wind, and Fire

by J. Mendez-Guide 1

Earth – warm beneath your feet on a spring day – cool and delightfully squishy between your toes after a summer shower – barren, hard, and unyielding after a winter storm. It's a scenic mountain trail in the Sierra Nevada, a winding dirt road in the Appalachians, a sandy wash in the Colorado Desert. It nurtures and provides sustenance for all living things.

Wind – cool breezes on a hot summer day – the warm breath of the Chinook in midwinter – leaves blowing and rustling in the fall. It's a clipper ship in full sail on the Atlantic coast, a windmill spinning on a Nebraska farm, hawks soaring high above a mountain meadow. Its greatest power is in its absence.

Fire – soft glowing candlelight – a crackling campfire – a log's dying embers in a cabin's hearth. It warms our hands and our houses, cooks our food, and adds romance to our souls. It is our servant yet not its master.

And water – is it not important? What other element enables the earth to sustain us, gives purpose to the windmill, and has more power than fire? **Water** – a babbling brook – a cool drink in an old tin cup – the delight of a spring rain. It is the essence of life.

Then the **earth** moved, the **wind** howled, the **fire** roared, and the **water** pushed aside everything in its path. Beauty and romance were



replaced by death and destruction. Mother Nature was anything but nice, and it quickly became evident that it was only mankind that was being fooled. The electricity was out, the warning horn never sounded, and not even the cell phones worked. Back to the future took on a whole new meaning!

It wasn't long before the **water** dried up, the **fire** was put out, the **wind** was still, and the **earth** was only mildly trembling. It also wasn't long before all the **if onlys** came out to play. **If only** we had bought that helicopter. **If only** we had done more controlled burns. **If only** we had cut down those dead trees. **If only** we had reinforced those historic buildings. **If only ...**

Yes, after the winter rains the denuded hillsides will be covered with beautiful wildflowers. Tender grasses will sprout and the deer will come back. Mother Nature will bandage her wounds and heal herself as she always has. Mankind will have learned his lesson, be more careful, and plan more thoughtfully for the future. He will be better prepared and more self-reliant because he will finally realize that he is not omnipotent, cannot manage everything, and that his

technology is not always what it is cracked up to be. And pigs will fly!

What if your land was cleared, firescaped, and equipped with a sprinkler system? **What if** the surrounding area had been burned in a wildfire just a year before? **What if** your house had a tile roof and a wide turnaround in the driveway? **What if** your house burned anyway and your neighbor lost her life fleeing from a fire that an arsonist or a careless hunter started? **What if** it was your relative who was crushed in the rubble of an unreinforced historic building? **What if ...?** The challenge? Interpreting that.

Afterword: Your author was not only a refugee from the Paradise and Cedar fires of 2003 but also at the top of the tower of Hearst Castle with a tour group when the 6.5 earthquake struck. It is my humble request that all who are called upon to interpret the events and the aftermath of these natural disasters please remember the survivors and make every attempt to not revictimize or further traumatize them by inadvertently blaming them for their misfortune. **Earth, wind, fire, and water** are not always things that mankind can control. 🐾

California's Tapestry

A Section of *The Catalyst*

Office of Community Involvement

Issue #19 - Winter 04

By Jack Shu

Tapestry: a "fabric" made up of many different color yarns — each yellow, black, white, brown, red, green, and purple strand distinctive and with new shades and colors weaving into the fabric every day. The material is flexible and strong as well as beautiful. It is rich with the warmth caused by each strand flowing side by side, up and over, in and around each other. That is the "California Tapestry" I dream of.

The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) and its leadership are working on such a "fabric." In 2002, the NAAEE Board adopted a position statement on diversity and accepted a set of recommended actions for both diversifying their organization and helping to diversify the field of environmental education. It starts with the following:

"The position statement recognizes the integral connections between environmental concerns and wider questions of social needs, welfare and economic opportunity. It also acknowledges the need for greater emphasis on equity and celebration of diversity within NAAEE and in the field of environmental education."

NAAEE committed itself to eight actions. In brief they are as follows: 1) Make the Diversity Committee a standing committee which will review the work plans and budgets; 2) Biannually reevaluate and modify mission statement and documents; 3) Regularly appoint people of color to the board of directors; 4) Establish a fund raising strategy to support efforts to increase diversity; 5) Examine all aspects of member services to ensure that everything is being done to become more intentionally inclusive; 6) Annually set aside an extra day during one board meeting where the board can participate in cultural sensitivity training which focuses on knowledge, skills and awareness as it relates to the board and the organization; 7) Survey state, provincial and regional EE associations to learn about their work in this area and then work with them to adopt policy statements to support diversity and multiculturalism in those organizations; 8) At the board and executive level, develop collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations such as the National Association for Multicultural Education. For a more complete copy of the policy go to: <http://naaee.org/projects/diversitypol02.php>

NAAEE has by no means succeeded in reaching some type of comfort zone when it adopted this policy. It still has a lot of work to do. If anything, the organization, after over a decade of trying many diversity-related efforts, now has a more realistic picture of what must be done. This is not an easy task and compared to many other natural resource based organizations, NAAEE has made a giant step forward.

As a member of NAAEE, I know that it was not just the organization's leadership that led them to continuously make diversity a major issue. Nor was it just a pragmatic look at the future and how the organization as well as the field of environmental education needed to change. To a great extent, it was the individual professionalism of its members. They know it is right to question whether something is fair, Is it inclusive? Is some information missing or why is a whole group of people not present? Then they ask, "How do **we** need to change?" That is what "California Tapestry" has been trying to help park professionals with for nearly ten years, to help make that "fabric" real.

To make contributions or comments to "California's Tapestry" in the future, contact Michelle Edwards in the Human Rights Office. 🐾

Submit articles and comments to: Michelle Edwards in the Human Rights Office MEDWA@parks.ca.gov (916) 653-8148 or Fax (916)653-5645

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